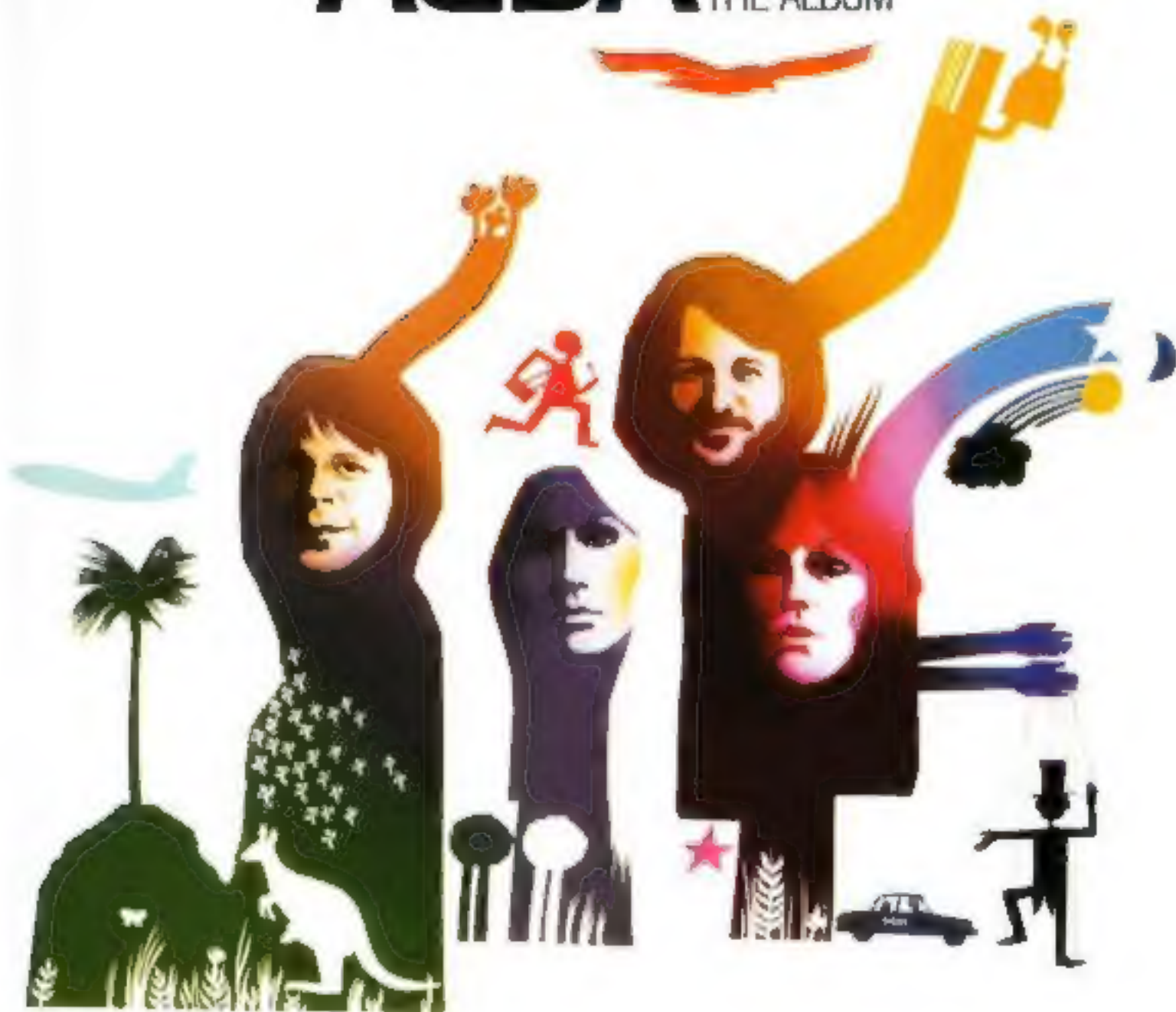


ABBA[®] THE ALBUM







ABBA THE ALBUM

■ ABBA THE ALBUM

ABBA – The Album was first released in Sweden as Polar POLS 282 on December 12, 1977. Recording sessions began in May 1977 and continued until November 1977. The album was recorded at Marcus, Metronome and Glen studios in Stockholm, and Bohus Studio in Kungälv, Sweden.

• ABBA on stage during their 1977 tour

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■ Golden girls and boys

Lead writer by Carl Magnus Palm

ABBA started recording their fifth LP, *ABBA – The Album*, on May 31, 1977. At this point, two and a half months had elapsed since they completed their highly successful tour of Europe and Australia. The tour had started in Oslo, Norway at the end of January and finished in Perth, Australia on March 12. In between, the group had performed before hundreds of thousands of people – the great majority of them in Australia, where ABBAmania was in full cage.

In the Autumn of 1976, while ABBA were rehearsing for the tour, the group felt that they wanted to come up with a few specials for their show: something extra, that was more than just playing their hits and other popular songs. Björn and Benny, who had long been dreaming of writing a musical one day, grabbed this opportunity to make a risqué attempt in this area.

What they came up with was a 20 minute “mini-musical”, entitled *The Girl With The Golden Hair*. The story centred around a girl who dreams of being a singer, leaves her small town to

embark on a successful career as an artist, but finds that she has been trapped by her own fame.

Four new songs were written specifically for the mini-musical: *Thank You For The Music*, *I Wonder (Departure)*, *I’m A Marionette* and *Get On The Carousel*. When the tour was over, the first three titles would be recorded during sessions for the new album. *Get On The Carousel*, however, was very much a “stage number” with long instrumental passages and a repetitive structure, so it was never attempted in the studio. Instead, a part of the time was used for *Hole In Your Soul*, a brand new album track. *Thank You For The Music* was the first of the musical songs to be committed to tape. At this point, the song was arranged with a slight ragtime feel, and Agnetha found her vocal interpretation by imitating American singer Doris Day. The rest of the group contributed intricate backing vocals.

But after all this work, ABBA still didn’t feel that they had cap-





tured *Thank You For The Music* correctly. They decided to start all over again. In July the group finally hit upon the arrangement and feel that were right for the song, and this recording was included on *ABBA – The Album*.

Meanwhile, the first version languished in the vaults for more than 17 years until it was rediscovered and released on the 1994 CD box set *Thank You For The Music*. It has been included as a bonus track on this CD.

Just before ABBA started recording *ABBA – The Album*, Björn, Benny and sound engineer Michael B. Tretow had been on a short trip to Los Angeles. The purpose of the visit was to check

the first one was provisionally called *A Bit Of Myself*. Stig Anderson, the master of the catchy song title, came up with the phrase *The Name Of The Game*. This became the new title of the song, although it was Björn who wrote the actual lyrics. The second US-inspired track was *Eagle*, where Björn's lyrics were coloured by the freedom spirit in the novel *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*. By the time ABBA were finished with the songs, they had both been filtered through the group's European sensibilities, but it could be argued that the American roots shone through even on the finished record.

The Name Of The Game is also one of the few songs where Björn and Benny have authorized a sampling of an ABBA song.

"Björn found the title on a jogging-round"

out recording equipment for the new studio that ABBA were going to build in central Stockholm – it would take another year until the studio was ready for use.

But the trip proved inspirational in other respects as well. The West Coast music scene at the time was very much dominated by laidback groups like The Eagles and Fleetwood Mac. Both bands were already favourites for Björn and Benny, but spending time in the place where all that music was created turned out to have an immediate effect on their own creative process. As a direct result of the visit, two songs were written

in 1996, hip hop band The Fugees wanted to use the bass synthesizer groove of the recording for their own track *Rumble In The Jungle*, recorded as the theme song for the movie *When We Were Kings*. Björn and Benny were amused that their Scandinavian recording could mean something for a hip hop act, and so they decided to make an exception to their otherwise strict "no sampling allowed" rule.

The Name Of The Game was the first single from *ABBA – The Album* – indeed, the first since the Arrival track *Knowing Me, Knowing You* eight months earlier. Like most other of the group's

« Press conference in Sydney, March, 1992.

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singles around this time it turned out to be a global Top 10 hit, spending five weeks at the top of the UK charts.

All in all, the sessions for *ABBA – The Album* were both hectic and stressful for the group. In the middle of working on the LP, they were still shooting scenes for their upcoming feature film, *ABBA – The Movie*, most of which had been filmed during the tour of Australia in March. Furthermore, Agnetha was pregnant with her and Björn's second child. This meant that she needed a lot of rest and couldn't take part in the recording sessions to the extent that was needed if the album should be completed before the end of the year. *ABBA – The Movie* was scheduled for release in December, and the plan was that the album would be issued around the same time.

With a lot of hard work the band actually managed to meet the deadline in Scandinavia, where the LP was released just a few weeks before the end of the year – and one week after the birth of Björn and Agnetha's son Christian. But because of all the production demands of manufacturing hundreds of thousands of albums, the rest of the world had to wait until the beginning of 1978 before *ABBA – The Album* reached their local record shops. The worldwide release of the LP coincided with the second single to be issued from the sessions, *Take A Chance On Me*. Björn got the inspiration for the title on a jogging round, when the rhythmic phrase "t-k-ch" started running around in his

head. The phrase turned into the words "take a chance," and from that basic line the rest of the lyrics took shape.

Along with the new album, *Take A Chance On Me* became a success all over the planet. In USA, it was the single that spearheaded a major promotional campaign for ABBA in the spring of 1978. As a result, the song reached number three on the chart, making it the group's best-placed American single with the exception of the chart topper *Dancing Queen*. In terms of pure sales and other statistics, however, *Take A Chance On Me* has actually proved to be the most successful of all ABBA singles in the United States. *ABBA – The Album*, meanwhile, was a major hit album internationally in 1978. Apart from the mini-musical songs and the hit singles, the LP offered gems like *One Man, One Woman*, arguably one of Frida's best vocal performances during the ABBA years. The song was yet another track characterized by an American soft rock feel. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why the album became ABBA's best placed LP on the US charts.

ABBA – The Album was one of the group's most ambitious projects, and *The Girl With The Golden Hair* pointed towards Björn and Benny's musical career after ABBA. But for now, they were devoting most of their energy to straightforward pop music. Only a month or two after the international release of *ABBA – The Album* they were back in the studio working on their next hit-filled LP. ■

An alternate shot from the original inner sleeve session for ABBA – The Album. ■





11 Eagle

They were there from the early

long Hiding the sight, that they tell
 where were places (perhaps) my soul
 And they've found some treasure!

They (to be) brought (all) under (me)

And (to) go to (the) eagle

And (to) go (to) (the) eagle

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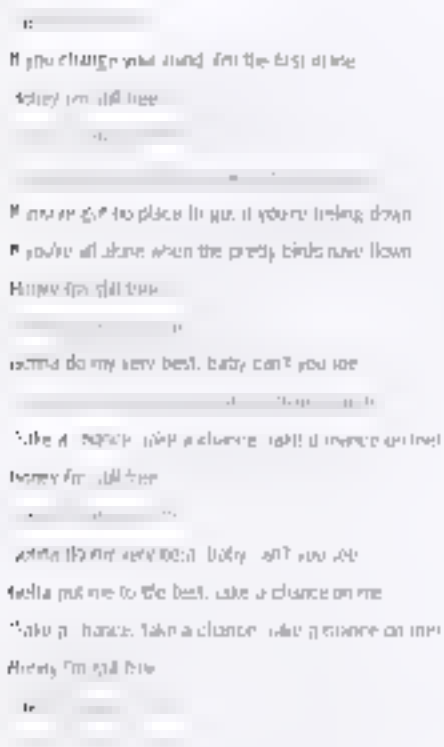
(to) go (to) (the) eagle

(to) go (to) (the) eagle





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13 One Man, One Woman

Universal/Union Songs 5:4

You and I, not a single word at the breakfast table
Though I would have liked to begin
So much that I wanna say, but I feel unwell
You wake and you close the door
Like you've done many times before
And I cry and I feel so helpless
Two friends and two true lovers
Somehow we'll help each other through the hard times

One man, one woman
One life to live together
One chance to take that never comes back again
You and me, to the end
I could see the sun through the open window
Inside everything feels so cold
What's wrong, what is happening
I hope that if you love me
Sometimes when I just can't cope
I cling to a desperate hope
And cry just for the love you

Two friends and two true lovers
Somehow we'll help each other through the hard times
One life to live together
One chance to take that never comes back again
Way down at a better life, but I have to wake up
The young of a love in the day

Our love is a precious thing
Wards the pain and the suffering
And it's never too late for changing
One true life without
Two friends and two true lovers
Somehow we'll help each other through the hard times
One man, one woman
One life to live together
One chance to take that never comes back again
You and me, to the end

14 The Name Of The Game

Universal/Union Songs 3:50

Are you ever true in a short time
Only a week since we started
I think in my life today (and)
I'm giving more heartfelt
We can never add much to me
But think on yet in your heart
There's a lot you can teach me

What's the name of the game
Does it mean anything to you
What's the name of the game
Can you tell me why I do
Tell me please, cause I have to know
I'm a beautiful child, beginning to grow

And you make me slow
What I'm trying to conceal
If I told you, would it be
Would you laugh at me
If that's okay for you
Could you feel the same way too
Wanna know
I guess I might be one to see
And I am never invited
Now I am here talking to you
No wonder you feel so





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And you make me feel like I'm home
And the way you see through me
Got a feeling you give me on those
Days when I look at you
When I'm alone
Your smile and the sound of your voice
Does it mean anything to you
Got a feeling you give me on those
But it means a lot, what's the name of the game
Your smile and the sound of your voice
It's the only thing I need
Tell me please, cause I have to know
For a boy like me, beginning to grow
And you make me feel
And you make me shine
What I'm trying to convey
If I'm alone, would you be my friend
Would you laugh at me if I said, come for me
Could you feel the same way too
When I'm
When I'm alone
The name of the game
It says an impossible case
Does it mean anything to you
That I'm alone on those
That it means a lot
What's the name of the game
Your smile and the sound of your voice
Can you feel it the way I do
Got a feeling you give me on those
But it means a lot, what's the name of the game

I was an irresponsible case
Does it mean anything to you
Does it mean a lot to you
Does it mean a lot

035 Move On

by Andersson, S. Andersson, B. Ulvén
lyrics by John Schydtz

They say a restless lady can help a prince
A voyage and a better life with love is distant goal
I explore the heavens and search inside
What really doesn't matter as long as I can tell myself
I'm always right
And I'll be in the end, like I imagine

Move on

Like a wind that's always blowing, life is flowing

Move on

Like the sunrise in the morning, life is dawning

Move on

Like a wind that's always blowing, life is flowing

Being part of it, being in it

With the urge to move on

As I traveled every country

I've traveled in my mind

It's not the same as a journey

A trip through which and how

And somewhere lies the answer

To all the questions why

What really makes the difference

Between all dead and living things, they will no stay why

Like a child in the garden

Or a sunset

Move on

Like a wind that's always blowing

Life is flowing

Move on

Like the sunrise in the morning

Life is dawning

Move on

Like a wind that's always blowing

Being part of it

Being in it

With the urge to move on

The morning breeze that ripples the surface of the sea

The crying of the seagulls that follow every rain

And the morning sun

But how can I explain

The wonder of the moment

To be able to feel the sun that follows every rain

And the morning sun

Life is flowing

Move on

Like a wind that's always blowing

Life is flowing

Move on

Like the sunrise in the morning

Life is dawning

Move on

Like a wind that's always blowing

Being part of it

Being in it

With the urge to move on





Without a song it's like a dance what are we
So I say thank you for the music
I'm giving it to me

08 I Wonder (Departure)

By Andersson/B. Andersson/B. (Sweden)
Lennart/Tina-Torgny AB

This park and these leaves
Old streets I have walked
Everything dear
Will it be here
One day when I am returning
My friends will get married
Have children and homes
It sounds so nice
Well-planned and wise
Never missing anything
I wonder
It's frightening
Leaving now
Is that the right thing
I wonder
It scares me
But who the hell am I
If I don't even try
I'm not a coward
Oh no, I'll be strong
One chance in a lifetime
Yes, I will take it
It can't go wrong
My friends and my family
They still love me

Because I've missed
Days that I've missed
Everything old and familiar
I wonder
It's frightening
Leaving now is that the right thing
I wonder
It scares me
But who the hell am I
If I don't even try
I'm not a coward
Oh no, I'll be strong
One chance in a lifetime
Yes, I will take it
Yes, I will take it
It can't go wrong

09 I'm A Marionette

By Andersson/B. (Sweden)
Lennart/Tina-Torgny AB

Yikes so free
That's what everybody's telling me
But I feel I'm far so out-of-control
Pushed around, rejected
Something's wrong, got a feeling that I don't belong
As if I have come from outer space
Old rd place, like King Kong
I'm a marionette, just a marionette, pull the string
I'm a marionette, everybody's pet, just as long as I sing
I'm a marionette, see my puppet, 'round and 'round
I'm a marionette, I'm a marionette, just a silly old clown
Like a doll, like a puppet with no will at all

And suddenly I caught me how to feel,
How to walk, how to feel
Can't explain, but got so one but myself to blame
Something's happening, I don't control
Lost my mind, it's mine
I'm a marionette, just a marionette, pull the string
I'm a marionette, everybody's pet, just as long as I sing
I'm a marionette, see my puppet, 'round and 'round
I'm a marionette, I'm a marionette, just a silly old clown
Look this way, just a little smile, is what they say
You look better on the photograph if you laugh
That's what
I'm a marionette, just a marionette, pull the string
I'm a marionette, everybody's pet, just as long as I sing
I'm a marionette, see my puppet, 'round and 'round
I'm a marionette, I'm a marionette, just a silly old clown
You're so free
That's what everybody's telling me
Yet I feel I'm far so out-of-control
Pushed around, rejected

10 Thank You For The Music

(Dance Day Version)

By Andersson/B. (Sweden)
Lennart/Tina-Torgny AB

Credits

Musicians: Bass: Rüdger Gunnarsson. Drums: Ola Brunkert for *Late A Chance On Me*, Ole Mari, Ole Wormen and *Thank You For The Music*; Roger Palm. Lead guitar: Lasse Wellander for *Eagle*; Jonne Schaffer. Other guitar: Jari Järvi, Ulfar Ulfarsson and Lasse Wellander. All keyboards: Benny Andersson. Percussion: Mikaela Gunnarsson. Saxophones and flutes: Lars G. Carlsson. String arrangements: Rüdger Gunnarsson. On the Dons Day version of *Thank You For The Music*: Keyboards: Benny Andersson. Acoustic guitar: Björn Ulvén. Electric guitar: Jonne Schaffer. Bass: Rüdger Gunnarsson. Drums: Ole Brunkert.

Produced and arranged by Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvén. Engineered by Michael E. Trolow. Recorded and mixed at Marcus Music and Metrocenter Studio. The Name Of The Game mixed at Polar Studio. Additional overdubs recorded at Glen Studio.

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Backstage in bar. >





